

It's "common knowledge that a great many of the top people" take — or did until recently — classified CIA documents home with them, two persons close to CIA operations contend. A CIA agent was suspended recently after such papers were found in his home. Julian Morrison's story is on Page 18.

## Tofte's Claim Backed

# Top-Secret Homework Is a Commonplace,

## Insiders Say

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By JULIAN MORRISON

Two persons with intimate knowledge of some of the inside operations of the Central Intelligence Agency have corroborated suspended agent Hans V. Tofte's claim that it is "common practice" for high-level CIA officials to take home classified Agency documents with them after work.

Mr. Tofte was suspended from his \$25,000 job earlier this month after a young Agency employee found such documents "by chance" in the veteran CIA operative's Georgetown home.

### INCIDENT

One of the sources who backed Mr. Tofte's claim described a social occasion when the host, a high CIA official, excused himself a few minutes, leaving a stack of documents behind.

Before he left, the source said, the Agency man tapped the stack with his finger.

"This is secret," the source quoted him, "I just wanted you to know it."

The other source, a former CIA agent who left the Agency voluntarily and is now working elsewhere in the Government, commented that "it was common knowledge that a great many of the top people took this kind of stuff home with them all the time."

"The reason," he said, "is simply that they can't get to all the work they have to do during office hours."

Altho this source did not know it, he almost literally quoted Mr. Tofte's earlier explanation, made privately to this reporter, that one group of

Agency papers in his home were there because he had been unable to complete work on them during his regular day.

The others, he has said publicly, were reference materials — admittedly Agency documents, too — being used to complete portions of a training plan he said he's worked out for nine years.

### OFFER

Mr. Tofte said that when CIA security personnel asked him to go to Langley for questioning late in July, just after the papers had been removed from his house, he offered to take them to the homes of "at least six" other top grade Agency employees who, he said, he knew habitually took classified documents home with them.

He said the security agents refused his offer.

Lengthy interviews last week with persons either engaged in Government intelligence work or familiar with the field, revealed that altho none of them knows Mr. Tofte personally, all of them share his view that the Agency blundered in handling the initial case against him.

### FIND

The CIA said one of its agents found the classified documents after he and his wife went to the Tofte home at 1687 35th-st nw to inspect a basement apartment that was for rent.

The Agency did not give details as to why the employee was on the third floor of the house, which is where the papers were found.

But it did say the employee

returned the next day, with his wife and a CIA security officer, at which time the papers were removed.

### NO WARNING

One veteran intelligence man said he felt that the Agency may have been seeking a way to punish Mr. Tofte because normal procedure would have called for a warning to him to return the papers.

Such a warning, he said, is normally given by means of a "cut out" — an intermediary who would be sent to Mr. Tofte with notice that other Agency officials knew of the presence of the documents.